

# PEACE

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Bulgaria

Jenny  
Vernor



Olena  
Korolishchuk  
♥

Jessie  
Baumgartner  
from

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Danbawa

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# ANNUAL REPORT 2022

Lga Tsaryk  
CZ

Seldan  
wants peace  
SP

Executive Summary



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**2022** - what a year! In October 2021, Russian and Ukrainian young people discussed and celebrated together impressively, touchingly and so optimistically at our Europaburg. Today they are in a terrible war. The war has returned to Europe, the Russian attack makes clear once again, how fragile the idea of peace in Europe - which has already become a matter of course - truly is!

**2023** - will it be the year of hope for dialogue and peace? The message of the young participants in the peace seminars "We Want Peace" must be implemented! We will do everything we can to ensure that these young voices are heard!

On behalf of our team, I would like to thank you very much for your support and participation in the past year 2022. We brought 2800 suggestions into the discussion about the future of Europe, 750 participants were our guests at the Europaburg, worked, developed perspectives, did leisure activities and celebrated. And they have developed a common European spirit!

The European Union has declared 2023 the Year of Skills. We will therefore pay special attention to young people with professional activities in our youth encounters. In addition, of course, our peace seminars will again play an important role. This applies to Ukraine, the Western Balkans or Greece and Turkey.

If 2022 has taught us anything, it is this: peace is a fragile good! Therefore we have to promote and strengthen it with our activities at the Europaburg. In this sense I would like to thank all supporters and contributors, without whom this ambitious project, which is also so important for our future, would not be possible.

Sincerely,



Christoph Leitl, President EYFON





## EYFON meets FRIDA and "European Bee-Day"

30.05.2022 - 03.06.2022 | Austria, Greece, Slovenia, Sweden

EYFON started the 2022 season with EYFON meets FRIDA. 17 students and 6 teachers from Greece, Sweden, Slovenia and Austria spent some eventful days at the Europaburg in Neumarkt. The project was characterized by sustainability, youth goals and bees and is to be continued with other partners in the coming years.

Pupils from the Fridagymnasiet Mölnlycke, the IT-HTL Ybbs and the Anton Martin Slomšek high school in Maribor experienced the habitat of bees as part of a "European Bee Day" and got to know the "Holzwelt Murau" and sustainable projects in the region. Wild and honey bees are an important part of a functioning environment and a flourishing agriculture. The production of honey is largely sustainable in Europe and contributes to a sensible circular economy in the sense of the Green Deal. The young people were prepared in advance for the EU regulations and projects and learned from practical examples in the Zirbitzkogel - Grebenzen nature park how the implementation of environmental goals can be achieved. In the "Naturlesemuseum Neumarkt", the pupils were able to get to know the distribution of roles in the bee colony as well as the biology and way of life of the bees using a show beehive. With self-made "flower bombs" the young people made their own contribution to the preservation of the habitat of wild bees. The afternoon was dedicated to a visit to the organic beekeeping business of the Maier family in Mühlen, which looks after around 70 bee colonies. Everyday work of a beekeeper, honey production and sustainable marketing were also topics before the students were allowed to extract honey themselves and tasted the differences between blossom and forest honey at a tasting.

Together with the "Panthersie for Europe" team, the young people designed postcards on the subject of sustainability and various "My message for Europe" podcasts. The specialist program was rounded off with discussions on the subject of "My future in Europe" with Claudia Weyringer from the EYFON team. The highlight of the leisure program was the soapbox e-mobility challenge at the end of the week, in which the participants demonstrated a great deal of creativity and skills.



Co-funded by  
the European Union



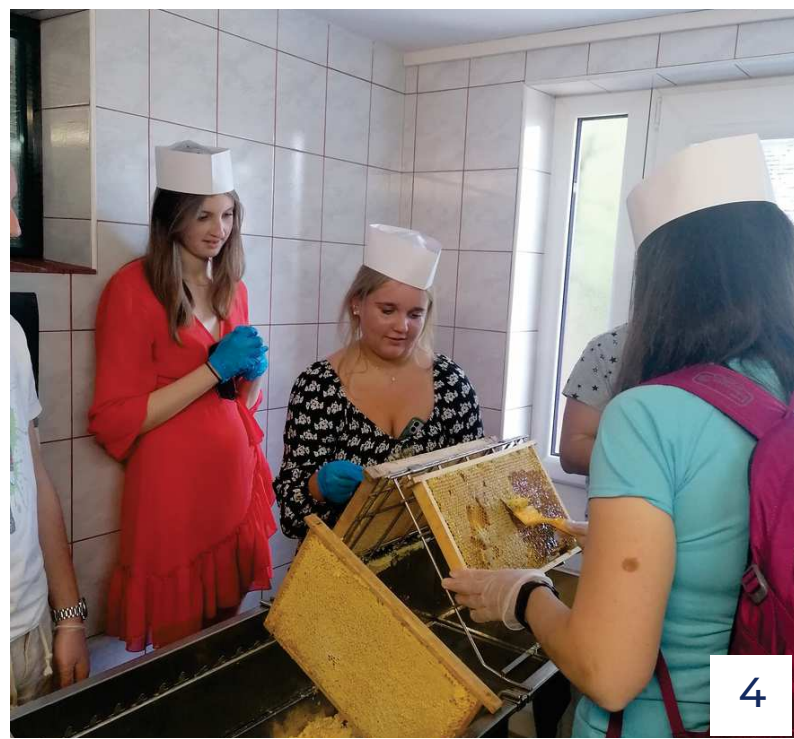
Das Land  
Steiermark

→ Kultur, Europa,  
Außenbeziehungen

This project has been co-funded by the European Union and Land Steiermark.









## EYFON | Styrian Partner Region Days "SPRD"

20.06.2022 - 24.06.2022 | Western Balkans

18 students from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia accepted our invitation to take part in the Styrian Partner Region Days at the end of June. The call for participants took place via the contacts of Land Steiermark to the respective partner regions in the Western Balkans and via the network of the Austrian Chamber of Commerce in these countries.

A varied program of specialist lectures, discussions, workshops and leisure activities inspired the young Europeans. In addition to EYFON Managing Director Christian Buchmann, who gave an overview of Conference on the Future of Europe, and Claudia Weyringer, who discussed with the students the future development of the EU and the opportunities that an expansion to include the Western Balkan countries could offer, one of the participants also organized a workshop on the subject of political responsibility.

Raft building at the Furtner Teich and 3D archery at the Zirbitzkogel, a hike through the Gragger Gorge and in particular the traditional midsummer bonfire at the Buschenschank Zeischgl in St. Marein near Neumarkt provided a lot of entertainment and unforgettable moments for the young people.



This project has been co-funded by Land Steiermark and the Austrian Chamber of Commerce.





# EYFON | Young Perspectives on the Future of Europe

30.06.2022 - 01.07.2022 | Special event on the occasion of the French Presidency | Vienna

In cooperation with the French Embassy and the House of the European Union in Vienna, EYFON organized a special format this year on the occasion of the French Council Presidency in the first half of 2022, in which youth issues in Europe were one of the main priorities. In addition, one of France's central concerns was to build on the conclusions of the Conference on the Future of Europe and to shape the European Union in a way that is close to the people and fit for the future.

In the premisses of the French Embassy, 22 students and teachers from the Bundesgymnasium Lichtenfels Graz discussed together with H.E. Ambassador Gilles Pécout on their perspectives on the future of Europe. The highlight was the reception and concert that followed, at which the students also got to know the governor of the ÖNB, Robert Holzmann, and EU ambassador Martin Selmayr, representative of the EU Commission in Austria.

In the House of the European Union, Frank Piplat, Head of the Liaison Office of the European Parliament in Austria, together with EYFON Managing Director Christian Buchmann, Head of the Bundesrat delegation in the Conference of European Parliamentary Committees (COSAC), gave the young people an insight into the progress of the Conference on the Future of Europe the following morning.



Funded by  
the European Union





## EYFON | Peace Seminar and Ukraine-Day "Nice to meet you"

04.07.2022 - 08.07.2022 | Italy, Georgia, Latvia, Poland, Ukraine

Solidarity, intercultural understanding and, above all, peace in freedom characterize this year's dense program of events at the European Youth Forum in Neumarkt. As part of the first "EYFON | Peace Seminar EU – Ukraine" this year, where 26 young people from Ukraine, Italy, Latvia, Poland and Georgia discussed their future in Europe, peace, their personal freedom, but also propaganda and fake news, we opened the Europaburg castle on 5th July for everyone who wanted to show their support for Ukraine and the Ukrainian refugees who have found shelter in Neumarkt and surroundings. Numerous people from Neumarkt accepted the invitation and got to know typical regional songs and dishes on this atmospheric afternoon, which was organized together with the community of Neumarkt. A delegation from the West Ukrainian University in Ternopil, headed by Rector Prof. Andriy Krysovatty and Vice Rector for International Relations, Prof. Oksana Desyatnyuk, signed a cooperation agreement with EYFON and the market town of Neumarkt for even closer cooperation between the organizations involved.

During the seminar week, in addition to lectures, discussions and workshops on the subject of peace, the participants experienced many leisure activities in the region in cooperation with teamgeist and the Murau ambassadors: raft building, archery, tape art and an intercultural evening where the young Europeans presented their country to the other seminar participants, provided variety and strengthened the cohesion of the group.



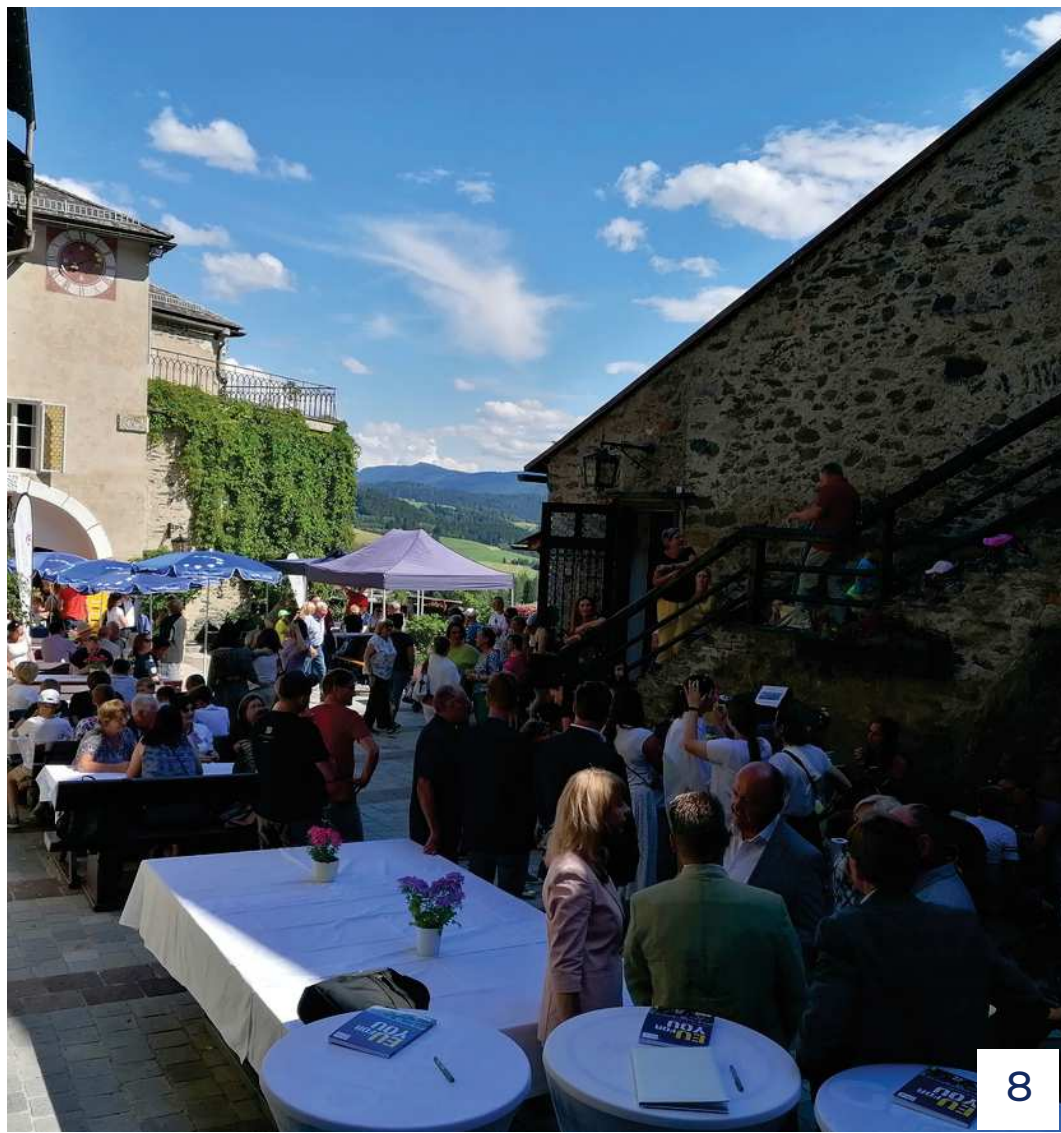
WIENER STÄDTISCHE  
VERSICHERUNGSVEREIN



We would like to thank Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein for sponsoring the scholarships for the 15 Ukrainian students and SPAR Austria for sponsoring 8 scholarships for the participants from Latvia and Italy.









## EYFON | VIG YouthDays 2022

01.08.2022 - 05.08.2022 | Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Georgia, Kosovo, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Ukraine

In the first week of August, everything revolved around the VIG YouthDays at the Europaburg in Neumarkt for the third time: 20 young people between the ages of 14 and 17 from 9 countries spent an exciting and varied time. What all young adults have in common is that at least one parent works for the VIG insurance group.

The initiator of the VIG YouthDays is the Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein, the main shareholder of the Vienna Insurance Group (VIG): "In cooperation with EYFON, we bring values such as diversity, intercultural understanding and moral courage closer to young adults. Right now it's important to focus on what we have in common. We believe in working together, especially when it comes to children and young people. Because they are our – and Europe's – future," explains Mag. Robert Lasshofer, CEO of Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein.

Among other things, the young participants created their own podcasts on the topic "My Message for Peace", discussed their ideas for a peaceful future in Europe worth living in and learned a lot about European solidarity and mobility programs. "Bridge building" at the Domino Rally, archery, geocaching and - the highlight for many - a visit to the Red Bull Ring in Spielberg followed by a go-kart race rounded off the exciting week. In order to get hold of one of the coveted places at the Europaburg, originality of the potential participants was required in advance: The young adults convinced with elaborately designed videos, collages, poems and essays on the topic "What Peace means to me". From 200 submissions, the creators of the best and most creative contributions were invited to the varied program of workshops, lectures, discussions and leisure activities.



WIENER STÄDTISCHE  
VERSICHERUNGSVEREIN

The initiator and sponsor of the VIG YouthDays is the Wiener Städtische Versicherungsverein, which brought them to life in cooperation with the European Youth Forum Neumarkt (EYFON).











## Highlights 2022

For the fifth time since 2018, the EYFON | MAGNA Apprentice Days took place from September 19th to 22nd. 25 apprentices from MAGNA Steyr Fahrzeugtechnik Graz, MAGNA Presstec and MAGNA Heavy Stamping took the opportunity to discuss topics such as sustainability, peace and their own future in Europe, to strengthen the team spirit and to get to know their colleagues better.

In addition to various activities with the Young European Federalists of Styria (JEF), a podcast workshop with Markus Plasencia and Konrad Fellerer from Panthersie for Europe and a discussion on current European topics with Claudia Weyringer (EYFON), a MAGNA company presentation with Dr. Gerald Harzl, Vice President HR Europe, rounded off the specialist program. The apprentices were able to demonstrate their endurance and skills, but also their creativity, during the varied leisure activities with go-karts on the Red Bull Ring, archery on the Kreischberg and a Tab Tour "Europe" with teamgeist.



EYFON thanks MAGNA for the good cooperation and looks forward to further successful EYFON | MAGNA ApprenticeDays in the coming years!





Fotocredit: Sajad Akbari (MAGNA)



Fotocredit: Sajad Akbari (MAGNA)



Fotocredit: Sajad Akbari (MAGNA)





## EYFON | European Peace Event und Season Closing Event

10.10.2022 - 14.10.2022 | Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Montenegro, Poland, Ukraine

A successful season for the European Youth Forum Neumarkt came to an end on October 14th with an atmospheric chestnut festival in the courtyard of Europaburg Neumarkt. Prior to this, 35 pupils and students from Albania, Bulgaria, Georgia, Greece, Montenegro, Austria, Poland and Ukraine had spent a week discussing their ideas and thoughts on peace and freedom in Europe as part of a "European Peace Event". The result - a "Declaration of Peace" - was presented to the guests by the young Europeans:

*We, the young people from many European countries, gathered working and celebrating at the Europaburg Neumarkt in Styria for a peace seminar, want to deliver one single message: Give peace a chance!*

*War causes death, suffering, destruction, displacement, pain. Why can't we live together in peace, so that young people in particular have a chance to develop their talents and lead a life according to their specific ideas? A life in a world worth living!*

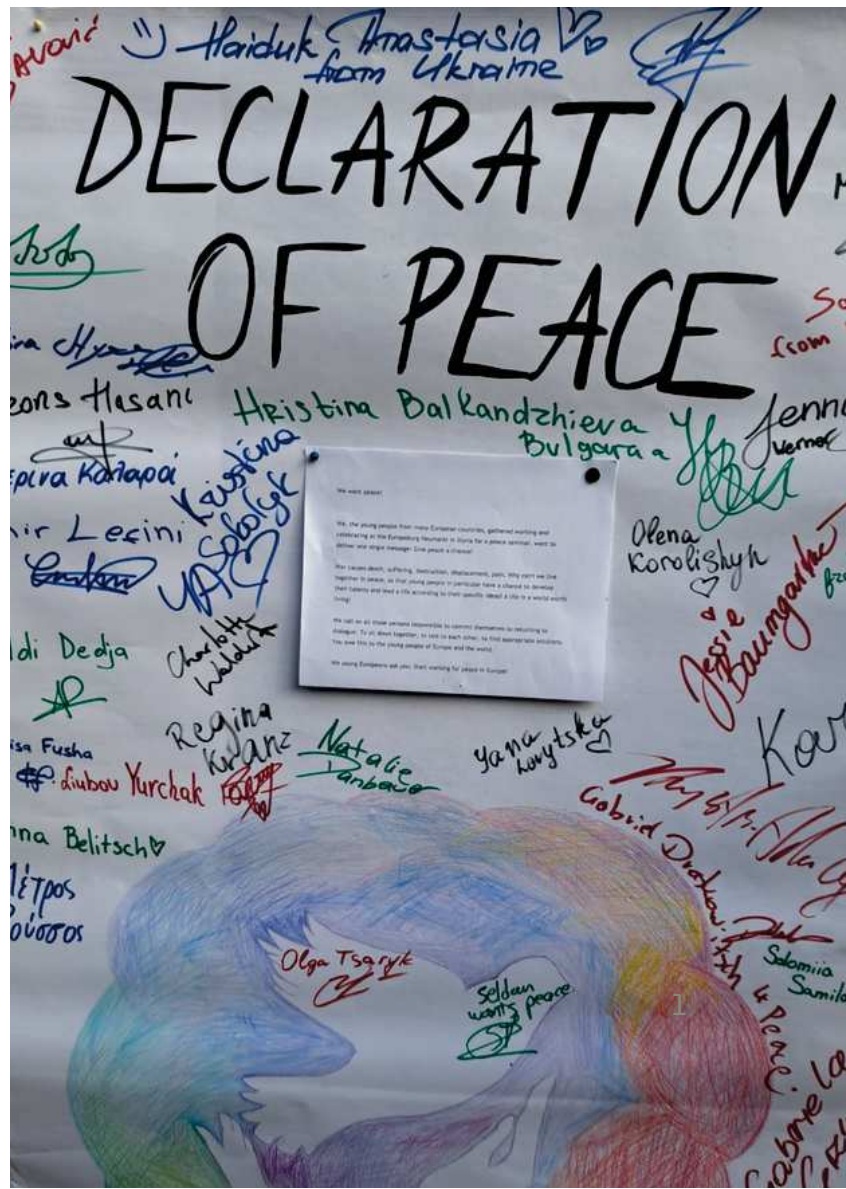
*We call on all those persons responsible to commit themselves to returning to dialogue. To sit down together, to talk to each other, to find appropriate solutions. You owe this to the young people of Europe and the world.*

*We young Europeans ask you: Start working for peace in Europe!*

During the seminar week it became clear how personal experiences, but also cultural and historical backgrounds of the individual young people shape the opinion about the current war events. Due to the individual concern of the Ukrainian participants, many discussions were also held with strong emotions, but without losing sight of peaceful coexistence, mutual respect and a common wish - peace in freedom.

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Ewald Nowotny, former governor of the Austrian National Bank and President of the Austrian Society for European Policy, clearly stated in his keynote speech: "What we need is a strong Euro and a strong Europe!"

And as one of the participants of the Peace Event appropriately added: "And a strong youth!"





EYFON President Christoph Leitl and Managing Director Christian Buchmann thanked the guests, friends, partners and sponsors of EYFON for their support and their very important investment in the future of Europe - our youth! They will work to ensure that this declaration is heard by the right people and have already sent it to the participants at the G20 summit in Indonesia.



**Raiffeisen-Landesbank  
Steiermark**



We would like to thank Energie Steiermark, Raiffeisen-Landesbank Steiermark and VAMED Vitality World for assuming the scholarships for this project.











Fotocredit: EFB Steiermark

## Europa-Forum 2022

15.07.2022 - 17.07.2022



Between July 15th and 17th, the EFB Steiermark - together with the JEF Steiermark, the EFB Oberösterreich, the EFB Kärnten, the EFBÖ and EYFON - invited to the Europaburg. In the "AudiMax", renamed in honor of Europe activist Max Wratschgo, the rule of law, Europe's role in the world, the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, European security policy and climate protection were discussed intensively under the motto "Europe, where are you?".



## Board meeting of the Murau Murtal regional management

24.06.2022



## Junge Wirtschaft Murau | After Work Drink

27.07.2022



Fotocredit: JW Murau



# EYFONISTAS about EYFON

*That week was unforgettable. We spent it with wonderful people from different countries, learned a lot about the different cultures of each country. There were many useful lectures where we worked in teams with foreign students. Of course there were activities and games and lots of time for communication. This is an incredible experience for each of us, communication with foreign students is always interesting and instructive. Thanks to this week, we made many new friends from different countries.*

*Thank you very much!  
It was the best time  
and I can't wait to see  
you again and  
participate in other  
events.*

*For me, a week in Austria passed like a single moment. When I went there, I didn't know what it would be and how. But it was simply an unforgettable time with foreigners from different parts of Europe. We had a lot of interesting lectures, we built rafts and swam in the lake, shot archery, had interesting games and tasks. And after such formal classes, we spent an incomparable time altogether, dancing and talking. I want to thank Christoph Leit for this opportunity to try something completely new, to see such a beautiful part of Europe as Neumarkt, and to make new friends!*

*The projects generate lots of feelings: curiosity while getting to know different topics, happiness while making friends, sadness while leaving, and the willingness to come back in the future. It truly is mesmerizing observing how developed connections are after only couple of days. And the most crucial part is that participants continue this unity not only for a significant amount of time but for years.*

*Thank you for an unforgettable week in Neumarkt. Because of this project, I made a huge amount of new friends. All of them are from different countries and this is an amazing feeling.*

*Thank you all for this wonderful week in Neumarkt. It was a very cool experience of communication with foreigners from different countries. We really had fun spending our time together, singing Ukrainian and foreign songs, dancing, playing games, various activities such as archery, building a raft on which we then swam. Also, thanks for organizing the lectures, which were interesting and important for the future of Europe. Communicating with foreigners, I learned a lot of interesting things about their countries and their culture. It was a week that I will never forget in my life.*



I would also like to thank you and the whole EYFON organization from the bottom of my heart for the amazing, mind-blowing, unforgettable experience that we all could take part in.

I spent just 5 days with my international comrades, but to all of us it feels like we have known each other for years: every moment was good to play games, chat and laugh, and since we have left the castle the group chat hasn't stopped for a second.

I think the purpose of the seminar has been achieved, since we are all aware that we are part of a bigger community, with no borders nor passports, that goes beyond the EU to include all of our nationalities (Georgian, Ukrainian, Latvian, Polish, Italian). The strong bond that was created made us organize already other occasions to meet again and trips to other countries, and I am pretty sure during the years this will not fade away.

Thank you and everyone that made this experience possible, I will be forever grateful.

The mix was perfect: interesting topics, fantastic people and surrounded by incredible nature.

I hope that EYFON will continue its mission to bring young people together to share their views and connect.

It was an incredible experience living in a castle - like in a fairy tale. The nature is amazing, the people were great and the activities and lectures were interesting.

I think that EYFON is a great organization with a lot to offer. I really thank you for this experience and I hope you continue the great job.

EXCHANGE, THE LOCATION, THE  
POSITIVE NATURE OF THE TEAM,  
TOLERANCE, LEISURE ACTIVITIES,  
GAMES

Being the part of the EYFON family was in the best things that happened to me this year.



## Renovation and redesign of the sanitary rooms in the south wing March and April 2022







Thank you to our Partners 2022



# Perspectives for 2023

## EYFON | Program Preview 2023

For 2023 we are again planning a varied program with a mix of our own and guest events in cooperation with existing and new partners. In the year of "Skills" we will focus our formats on young people in training or professional activity. But peace seminars will also play an important role in our calendar of events in the coming season. The following formats, among others, are being prepared or are the subject of concrete considerations for 2023:

### Peace Seminars:

- EU, Turkey, Greece
- EU, Ukraine
- EU, Western Balkans

### EYFON YouthDays:

- Alpe Adria
- Euregio (AT, CZ, DE)

### Special Events:

- Apprentices
- Young Professionals
- Young Perspectives on the Future of Europe in cooperation with FRIDA (Sweden, Greece, Slovenia, Austria)
- Young Perspectives on the Future of the Euro

### Guest Events:

- Europa-Forum
- Erasmus+ Youth Exchange | JEF Steiermark

## We look forward to a successful 2023 season!





## EYFON Foundation

At the beginning of March 2018, the Europahaus Neumarkt – Forchtenstein Castle – was brought into a non-profit foundation initiated and co-financed by Christoph Leitl and has since been called Europaburg Neumarkt. The foundation raises the necessary funds to maintain the building, its substance and its safety of use, as well as to make the necessary investments. In addition to Christoph Leitl as chairman of the foundation board, the endowment capital was contributed by his deputy Georg Spiegelfeld-Schneeburg and the foundation board members Franz Majcen, Gerhard Stürmer, Christian Buchmann and Max Wratschgo.

## European Youth Forum Neumarkt – EYFON

**EYFON** as the operating association plans, organizes and hosts various seminars at the Europaburg in Neumarkt in Styria with the aim of young people from all over Europe experiencing the "Spirit of Europe", exchanging ideas, networking and taking the idea of EYFON to their home countries. The EYFON team includes:

**Christoph Leitl**, who first came into contact with the idea of Europe in Neumarkt at the age of 18, is a convinced European and President of the European Movement Austria, the initiator and chairman of the EYFON Foundation and the operating association.

**Christian Buchmann**, Chairman of the Europe Committee in the Bundesrat and member of the EU Future Conference, is in charge of the operational implementation of goals and activities as Managing Director of EYFON.

**Kathrin Traumüller**, who studied law, is responsible for organizing the projects on site and is the contact person for participants, interested parties and regional partners.

**Claudia Weyringer**, self-employed management consultant, plans a wide variety of projects for EYFON as an external project manager and lectures at EYFON seminars.

**Interns and volunteers:** EYFON has had the quality label as a voluntary service host organization in the European Solidarity Corps since 2020 and is supported by volunteers and interns during the season.

## What we want

EYFON is a meeting and dialogue center with an educational mission for European young people and designs, organizes and hosts a wide variety of forums at the Europaburg Neumarkt.

In addition to the importance of Europe as a community of values and the importance of deepening integration, young people must also be given the opportunity to find a model for Europe in dialogue and encounters with their peers, to identify with it and to actively propagate it.



## IMPRINT

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